

The Family and Medical Insurance Leave (FAMILY) Act



Babies need time to bond with their parents and parents need time to care for their babies without jeopardizing their families' ability to pay for basic necessities. But the majority of working men and women do not have access to paid leave.

The Family and Medical Insurance Leave (FAMILY) Act, sponsored by Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-CT) and Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), would create a permanent, comprehensive national program that makes paid leave affordable for employers of all sizes and available to all workers and their families. 85 percent of working people in the United States do not have access to paid leave through their employers, forcing the majority of parents to make the impossible choice between taking the time they need to bond with and care for their babies and their economic security. The lack of a national paid leave policy disproportionately impacts Black and Latinx families, who are less likely to have access to paid leave and, on average, have fewer financial assets to weather gaps in income to take leave.

The FAMILY Act would ensure that all parents have time away from work to develop the strong relationships that are fundamental to their child's development and that families can take time off to care for a loved one with a serious health need. Specifically, the FAMILY Act is:

- ✓ **Inclusive:** Provided to **all working people**, no matter where they live or the nature of their job, including part-time, lower-wage, contingent, and self-employed workers. In addition, the FAMILY Act uses an inclusive definition of "family."
- ✓ **Comprehensive:** Offers comprehensive coverage of personal **family caregiving and medical** needs as reflected in the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). The FAMILY Act allows workers to take time to bond with and care for a newborn or newly adopted child (gender-neutral), to care for their own serious health conditions (including pregnancy and childbirth recovery), to care for a parent, child, spouse, or domestic partner with a serious health condition, and for particular military caregiving and leave purposes.
- ✓ **Meaningful:** Gives a meaningful duration of leave to allow people sufficient time to meet their care and health needs— at least 12 weeks – and a wage replacement rate and benefit level that makes taking leave financially possible for everyone. Workers can earn **66 percent of their monthly wages**, up to a capped amount – ensuring that workers earning low and middle wages have a higher share of their wages replaced.
- ✓ **Sustainable:** Funded in a way that is affordable for workers, employers, and the government without harming other essential programs. Funding is provided through **small employee and employer payroll contributions** of two-tenths of 1 percent each (two cents per \$10 in wages), or less than \$1.50 per week for a typical worker.
- ✓ **Secure:** **Protects workers from** retaliation or adverse employment consequences for requesting or taking leave.

Cosponsor and pass the FAMILY Act to secure the best beginnings for children and the best future for our country.

For more information, visit <https://www.zerotothree.org/FederalAgenda2021> or contact Jim Bialick, Director of Government Relations, at jbialick@zerotothree.org.